

CONGREGATION DORSHEI TZEDEK

An Affiliate of the Jewish Reconstructionist Federation
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Kislev - Tevet 5765

December 2004



President's Message

Nancy Gertz, president@dorsheitzedek.org

For me, it started with the disappearance of my best friend when I was 12 years old. I left for summer camp, and when I returned, I learned that my after-school Newport Creamery partner had died. I didn't know she was ill, nobody called to take me to the funeral, and I never went to her house again. Carla Mari simply vaporized.

Contemplating death is not an easy thing to do. It is exhausting, it is uncharted territory, and it has the potential for raising difficult memories of loss, like the sad tale I offer here. Yet philosophers and theologians have been writing about death for centuries as a way of meditating on the beauty and richness of life. For as we learn from Torah in the story of Adam and Eve, the world's first human beings, we cannot experience life without death, light without darkness, joy without pain. If we have the good *mazel* to live a long life, we will inevitably lose people that we love. Our only choices lie in how we will care for them, and how we will grieve. As partners, relatives, friends, and community, how will we support those who mourn, and how will we continue to remember those who have passed?

Just as individuals go through life cycle stages, so, too, do congregations. We have reached a stage in our congregational life when an increasing number of our members are experiencing bereavement and are learning what it is to be a mourner. As partners in the process, some of our members have communicated lack of familiarity with Jewish tradition and a desire to learn how to better support those who are in mourning. CDT's initiative around End of Life and Bereavement is intended as a response to these developments.

Our community will be offering a series of two parlor meetings, to be held in early 2005, at which members will be invited to share their personal stories, interest, concerns, and questions regarding CDT's study of "End of Life and Bereavement." The goal of the parlor meetings is to collect your thoughts and generate a plan for this initiative: we need to know areas of interest so we can generate a set of

priorities and a timeline, which will likely be several years long. Different opportunities/directions for the membership to consider will be explained at the meetings.

To facilitate the process, I encourage you to start thinking specifically about this (if you haven't already) in advance of the meetings. We have previously learned from some of those who participated in the Community Conversations earlier this year that the death of a loved one was a driving force in their desire to be affiliated with the synagogue. At the Board meeting last month, we learned that some people would like to have more opportunities to remember loved ones who have passed. Some people focused on the logistics of the "death industry" and spoke of the economic interests we might have in forging relationships with funeral homes in the area. A few Board members want to engage in Reconstructionist dialogue around such controversial issues as cremation, life support and suicide. There was some discussion of the value of working with other synagogues to create a liberal *Chevra Kadisha* (Burial Society) for the Boston area. Rabbi Marna and I have recently been discussing ways that the congregation could provide better support to members who experience the loss of a non-Jewish relative.

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What issues or questions will you bring to the discussion that will help to shape CDT's expression of how we approach death and dying in our community? While we couldn't dream of immediately addressing the myriad of issues and concerns that will undoubtedly arise on such a complex subject, your input is essential to getting us off to a good start.

Dates for the parlor meetings will be announced soon. I look forward to embarking on this important personal and communal journey with all of you

Dedicated to the memory of Carla Mari, who alternated bites of French fries and sundae spoonfuls with great precision, so her luck would never run out. May her memory be for a blessing.

New Torah of Money Topic: No-Interest Loan Fund

Wendy Gedanken, wgedanken@hotmail.com

In Exodus 22:24 it states, "If you lend money to My people, to the poor among you, do not act toward them as a creditor; exact no interest from them." Based on this *mitzvah*, Jewish communities developed no interest loan funds to help members in need. The idea of having such a fund at Dorshei Tzedek has been discussed from time to time. Recently, we received a grant to start a no-interest loan fund and we must now begin a serious discussion in order to design it. If you are interested in participating, please email Wendy Gedanken or call her at 617.332.1246.

Contacting Rabbi Sapsowitz: Rabbi Sapsowitz does not have regular office hours but is available to talk about any spiritual, religious, or personal issues that you might want to discuss. You can contact her at rabbi@dorsheitzedek.org or 617.965.0330 x2. If she is unavailable, there will be a rabbi on-call in case of emergency. Both the rabbi's voice-mail and Diane, the administrator, will have information on how to reach the on-call rabbi.

Board Meeting Notes

Peter Hess, phess@mit.edu

The board met on October 24. **Nicky Silver** and **Jill Volk** spoke to the board about the planning and thinking they've done for the End of Life and Bereavement initiative. Nicky is deeply acquainted with Jewish practices related to death and dying, largely through work she did when part of the Amherst area Reconstructionist community. Jill is a social worker who specializes in Hospice care. Community Conversations told us that many members appreciate or wish for the solace of community support and Jewish observance when facing a death or going through bereavement, and we are still working on how we want to express ourselves as a congregation when those in our community are coping with the death or impending death of someone close to them. The first stage in this process will be to have two parlor meetings, planned for January or February, to allow as many people as possible to give us their thoughts and then to collect and review that information. Please send your comments to bereavement@dorsheitzedek.org.

Wendy Gedanken reported on the formation of an interest-free loan study group within Dorshei Tzedek. The congregation was recently given an anonymous \$5000 grant to provide interest-free loans to our members in need. Making such loans is a traditional benefit that Jewish communities provide for themselves. The grant is a beginning – seed money for what we hope will become a better endowed fund. We now have to develop the guidelines for how to make and administer these loans. Anyone who wants to become involved with the study group can send email to Wendy at wgedanken@hotmail.com.

The Membership In-reach committee is looking into creating a Web-located photo directory of members. A text area adjacent to each photograph would allow people to list, along with their name, some personal data of their own choice. The committee believes that having photographs accessible on-line could reduce the time it takes for newer and older members get to know each other and be an aid for anyone in the congregation seeking to increase their feeling of familiarity with their fellow congregants. Participation would be entirely voluntary, of course, and volunteers would help those who want to participate but lack the technical means to do it on their own. Please direct feedback on this idea to webphoto@dorsheitzedek.org.

Shabbat Programs

All Shabbat services are held at the Dorshei Tzedek prayer space: 60 Highland Street in West Newton Square, in the Second Church of Newton. See the calendar for regular Saturday morning services.

All-ages Erev Shabbat Services

December 3, January 7, 6 – 7 pm

Join us for a musical, all-ages service to welcome Shabbat the first Friday of each month.

Erev Shabbat Services

December 17, January 21, 8 – 9:30 pm

Each month we welcome Shabbat with an evening of song, prayer, and reflection please join us!

Junior Congregation

December 18, January 15, 10:45 am - 12 noon

All 3rd graders and up are welcome to attend Junior Congregation beginning at 10:45 am in Room 111 (across from the Child Care Room) at 60 Highland Street. The service will be followed by a special kid-dush—and will conclude at 12 noon as the service in the sanctuary concludes.

Tot Shabbat

December 18, January 15, 10:30 am – 11:00 am

Join us in the Child Care Room at 60 Highland St. for a young people's service. This service is geared for children in preschool-Kindergarten and their parents. Contact Janet Boguslaw, boguslaw@brandeis.edu for more information



Chanukah Party

Marc Steinberg, marc_steinberg@skillcheck.com

Susannah Zisk, sez1@bellatlantic.net

Sunday, December 12, from 5 pm to 7 pm at the FUSN



Come join the *mishegas* with our annual Chanukah bash! **Bring your own menorah and candles!**

We'll begin with candle lighting and singing at 5 pm, followed by fun programs for kids of all ages (and a chance for adults to schmooze and do some learning together). Dinner will begin at approximately 6 pm. We need your help to make this a festive and filling meal. If your household's last name begins with A – G, bring dessert or fruit salad; H – O, bring a vegetable dish/salad; and P – Z, bring a substantial main (veggie/fish) course. **Be sure to bring enough food for at least 12–15 people. Please do not bring latkes; they will be provided.** Drinks will be provided as well. Based on previous years' wild successes, this is clearly not a party to miss! (Note: Chanukah begins on Tuesday evening, December 7, when we light our first candle at sundown.)

Bat Mitzvah of Naomi Frankston

We are proud to announce that our daughter, Naomi Frankston, will be called to the Torah as a Bat Mitzvah on **December 4, 2004**. She will read from *Parashat Va-Yeshev*. Naomi is a seventh grader at The Rashi School, a Reform Jewish Day School, in Newton. She is a member of the International Youth Thespian Society which honors excellence in school drama. Her other interests include creative writing and soccer. Please join us to celebrate this *simcha* at Shabbat morning services followed by Kiddush.—*Wendy and Charles Frankston*

Bar Mitzvah of Ethan Zolit

Please join us on **January 8 at 9:45 am** as our son Ethan is called to the Torah as a Bar Mitzvah. Ethan is a student at Brown Middle School, and has been a member of the Dorshei Tzedek community for seven years. Ethan enjoys reading and creative writing, and all aspects of science. He is a member of the Brown Cross Country team and BAYS soccer, and is an avid supporter of the Boston area professional sports teams. Ethan has been active in social action groups, and volunteers regularly at the Family Table food pantry. As part of his Bar Mitzvah experience, he will be collecting books that will be donated to children's groups in the Boston area. We hope that you will join us to celebrate this joyous occasion. A Kiddush Lunch will follow the service.—*Barbara and Jerry Zolit*

CDT Sings

Elaine Bresnick, ebresnick@comcast.net

 The Dorshei Tzedek choral group sings a variety of pieces with some connection to Jewish liturgy or culture. There is no requirement for membership, just an interest in singing with fellow CDT members. Our pieces range from simple rounds to more complex multi-part arrangements. We really enjoyed performing several pieces during our High Holiday services, and we hope to sing occasionally for other events during the year. We meet approximately once a month, usually at the Parish Hall at FUSN. Check the CDT web calendar for December meeting information. If you would like to receive email notification of our meetings and activities, or if you have questions about CDT Sings, please send e-mail to Elaine or call 617.964.5199 (home).

Dorshei Tzedek Writers' Group

James Kaplan, jameshkaplan@hotmail.com

Do you enjoy writing fiction, poetry or essays? Are you interested in getting together with other members of Dorshei Tzedek to share your craft and gain support and encouragement? Then consider getting involved with the Dorshei Tzedek Writers Group. We have met once so far and so we are still in the formative stages of figuring out what sort of group this will be and what we'll do together. We imagine getting together about monthly, to share what we're working on, seek advice from others, and engage in creative writing exercises. This is also a terrific opportunity to connect with other members of Dorshei Tzedek. If you're interested in learning more or finding out about our next meeting, please feel free to contact James at 617.393.0216 or via email, above.



Dorshei Tzedek Artists' Group

Cindy Rivka Marshall, cmars13@aol.com

We meet monthly for potluck lunch and conversation about our work as artists, in varied disciplines. Our hope is to allow for networking, support, and discussion about topics such as marketing and creative process. This group is open to new folks. For information about our next meeting, or to be put on the e-mail list, contact Cindy.



Kiddush Kommittee Report

*Robin Rouse, robin_rouse@us.ibm.com
and Ellen Pashall, Elpushall@aol.com*



The Kiddush committee has been hard at work helping to restructure our current Kiddush program. Sponsoring a kiddush is a wonderful way to honor someone or an event. While providing Kiddush to the community is part of an obligation of being a member of CDT, we want to recapture the joy and mitzvah aspects of the task. Our main goals are these:

1. Allow people to choose the date of the Kiddush they are sponsoring.
2. Acknowledge the event or person people are honoring by sponsoring the Kiddush.
3. Make sure people have reminders of their dates in plenty of time.
4. Find more options for providing the Kiddush.

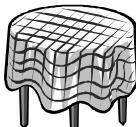
Please stay tuned. Details to follow in the beginning of next year. In the meantime, our suggestion box is still open. Please feel free to contact Robin or Ellen via email.

CDT Liaison Committee In Place

The Sabbatical Liaison Committee is available to help insure positive relations between rabbi and congregation. We are available to discuss any concerns or issues that may affect that relationship. Rabbi Sapsowitz and the committee will be in regular contact. Please feel free to call any one of us: **Ora Gladstone**: 617.630.9050, gladston@brandeis.edu, **Mark Bronstein**: 617.332.8424, mark@bronsteinlaw.com. **Louise Enoch**: 617.926.0836, lpenoch@aol.com, **John Holohan**: 617.244.4773, jholohan@mathworks.com, **Andrew Schiff**: 617.239.2523, manschiff@aol.com

Manageable Mitzvah Available

Karen Levine Arnold



It took a while for me to figure out how to contribute to Dorshei Tzedek in a way that uses my particular talents, works within my crazy schedule, and fits what I like to do. After a prolonged period of casting my eyes down at members' meetings, I came to terms with my guilt. I really can't take on a commitment involving another evening or weekend meeting. I'm crafts-challenged and decorating-impaired. Planning events makes me anxious. With a genuine wish to contribute SOMETHING, I finally found it. The perfect contribution. It needs doing. I can do it on my own time. It requires no special talent. For several years now, I've been providing my own small mitzvah to the congregation: laundering tablecloths. Yes, once every other week or so I pick up the used white and blue tablecloths from the church kitchen, take them home, and run them through the washer and dryer. I combine pick-up and return with trips to Hebrew School or Saturday morning services. Washing the tablecloths is a satisfyingly concrete accomplishment and a necessary service. I'll miss it when our family leaves in January for an 8 month stay in England.



Beyond the touching aspects of this tale are a moral and an opportunity. Moral of the story: You can find a way to contribute to Dorshei Tzedek in small ways, as well as large, and in ways that fit your life, your skills, and what you like to do. Opportunity: YOU can take over the Modest but Meaningful Tablecloth Mitzvah beginning in January 2005. Take it from me, this task is manageable and needed. If this sounds like it's for you, please contact **Ellen Pashall** at Elpushall@aol.com.

Nadiv Lev

We gratefully acknowledge the following contributions:

Max Borten

In honor of Mei See Sanderson

Amy Brodesky & Rex Flynn

In honor of Rabbi Marna Sapsowitz, Rabbi Toba Spitzer, Miranda Phillips, Meg Lederman, Cindy Shulak-Rome and the Hebrew School teachers for their help in preparing our daughter, Emily for her bat mitzvah

Carla Naumburg & Joshua Herzig-Marx

In honor of Ezra and Allison Hausman, Robert Kleinberg and Miranda Phillips, and Terry Traub and Rebecca Pomerantz for their generosity, and comfortable couches!

Cindy Shulak-Rome & Dan Rome

*In memory of Gaylord Northrop, Melanie's father
In honor of Emily Flynn's Bat Mitzvah and in honor of Josh Sacks' Bar Mitzvah*

Ann Spanel

Michael White

In memory of John Holohan Sr., John Holohan's father, Sharon Gorberg's father-in-law and Rebecca and Elizabeth Holohan's grandfather

There are many ways to support Congregation Dorshei Tzedek financially: through contributions to the General Fund, or to targeted funds such as the School or the Holy Book Funds. Donations can also be made to the Rabbi's Discretionary Fund. This fund is not part of the congregation's operating expenses and is administered solely by the rabbi. Monies in this fund are used for tzedakah in the greater community, for special needs of the congregation (e.g., to buy books or help pay for an adult education program), and, most importantly, to help out congregants in need. These additional contributions should also be made out to Congregation Dorshei Tzedek, but marked as intended for the Rabbi's Discretionary Fund

When sending a contribution, please include a note with the names of the donors, and the dedication, if any, as you wish them to be printed in the newsletter.

Chesed

If you or someone in your household is ill or in need of support, please contact **Rabbi Sapsowitz** (617.965.0330) or **Susan Manheim** of the Chesed Committee (781.449.2984).

Have you recently had a *mazel tov* moment? Let us know! Please notify the us of life cycle events, significant accomplishments, or other moments you would like to share with the Dorshei Tzedek community. E-mail your announcement to

dtnews@yahoogroups.com.

For congregants experiencing financial difficulties, help is available through the Rabbi's Discretionary Fund. This fund is administered solely by the rabbi and is completely confidential. If you are in need of assistance, please call Rabbi Sapsowitz at 617.965.0330 x2.

Refuah Sh'lema

The community of Congregation Dorshei Tzedek sends blessings and prayers for healing, *refuah sh'lema*, to **Peter Demuth** and **Francis Greenberg**. May healing and comfort come to you and to those who care for you.

Mazel Tov!

To **Emily Flynn** and **Josh Sacks**, who became Bat and Bar Mitzvah in November!

To **Cindy Bittker** and **Max Borten**, on the arrival of **Isaac** and **Ross** from Guatemala!

Todah Rabah

John Holahan and his family would like to express thanks to all who provided support, food and comfort at the recent shivah minyan for his father. Special thanks to **Nancy Gertz**, the Chesed Committee and **Rabbi Sapsowitz** for a very meaningful evening. It is a wonderful to be part of such a caring community.

Melanie Northrop and her daughters would like to send a large *todah rabah* to **Rabbi Sapsowitz** and the many DT congregants who in early October offered both sympathy and support around losing my father, Gaylord, while at the same time celebrating Sarah's bat mitzvah. You helped us to move through our shiva and simcha as gracefully and mindfully as possible, and allowed us to both honor grief and kevel.

The congregation would like to thank **Karen Arnold**, who for the last several years has quietly and reliably ensured that our *Kiddush* tablecloths were picked up, washed, dried, folded, and returned in time for their next use at *shul*. We are so appreciative of this mitzvah you have steadily performed for us for so long, and we wish you safe and rewarding travels. We'll miss you all and look forward to welcoming you back!

Chesed Committee

On Sunday, October 17, the Chesed Committee met to discuss new ways of reaching out to the Dorshei Tzedek community. Thanks to all who came to the meeting, to those who have recently expressed an interest in volunteering for Chesed and, finally, to all who continue to help our members in so many different ways. An e-mail will go out to announce the next meeting.

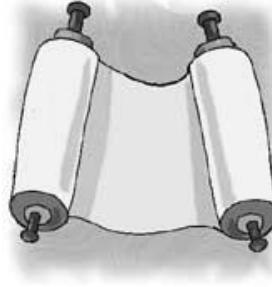
Adult Education

Shabbat Morning Torah Study

with Rabbi Marna Sapsowitz

December 18, January 15, 8:45 am

The early bird gets the wisdom! Once a month, before the Shabbat morning service, we'll examine the week's Torah portion in depth, using a supplementary text to shed light on its contents. All are welcome; no prior knowledge or regular attendance assumed. Bring your own coffee!



Behaving, Believing, Belonging: What Makes Reconstructionism Different?

with Rabbi Marna Sapsowitz

Continues on Wednesday evenings, December 1 and 15, 7:30 pm – 9 pm

What **does** make Reconstructionism unique? What is the range of "normative" Reconstructionist belief and practice? Are there "bottom lines," and, if so, where do we draw them? We will examine and discuss some contemporary texts and share some of our own "wrestlings." All are welcome (even if you missed the November session)!

Sarah, Hagar and Abraham: The Power of Empathy in Relationships

with Marsha Mirkin, PhD

Sunday, January 30, 10 am - 12 noon, 60 Highland Street

Members free; non-members \$10

During this session, we will join our foreparents Sarah, Abraham and Hagar in their joys and their sorrows as they struggle, make mistakes, learn, and grow. We will examine what this small piece of Torah can say to us about empathy, attention, and compassion. These teachings can guide us as we try to understand ourselves and our own relationships. Text will be read in English and no previous knowledge of Torah is required. Marsha Mirkin, Ph.D. is a clinical psychologist and resident scholar at the Brandeis University Women's Studies Research Center. She gives workshops throughout the Boston area about discovering personal meaning in Torah stories. Her newest book, *The Women who Danced by the Sea: Finding Ourselves in the Stories of our Biblical Foremothers* was released in October.

Tikkun Olam

GBIO Update

Ezra Hausman, ezrad@rcn.com

Over the last few months, Dorshei Tzedek members have been involved in two GBIO initiatives: The Nursing Home Campaign Initiative and the Organized Money Campaign.

The Nursing Home Campaign Initiative

On October 14, over 500 GBIO members gathered at Temple Salem in Dorchester to discuss the treatment of nursing home workers with Attorney General Tom Reilly. After GBIO members testified to violations of workers' civil rights, Reilly pledged that his office will follow-up on reports of mistreatment and will send a written advisory to all Massachusetts nursing homes about expectations for treatment of caregivers.

On October 28, five Dorshei Tzedek members joined in a crowd of 140 in a protest at the Chetwynde Nursing Home in West Newton. The protest was called because of the aggressive and hostile approach to GBIO initiatives by Beverly Enterprises, Chetwynde's owner. Specifically:

1. The home summarily barred two Newton clergy from performing worship services for Chetwynde residents, because Beverly learned that they were from Churches that are part of GBIO. Beverly apparently feared that these clergy, by their presence, were somehow catalyzing efforts around unionization. You can see what workers may be up against! In response to our protest, Beverly backed down on this issue.
2. Beverly has refused to meet with a local delegation of Newton church and synagogue members who wanted to establish a dialogue on the care environment for workers and residents. The dialogue is aimed at discussing how the care environment can be strengthened so that residents receive better care from a work force that is not mistreated or overworked.
3. Beverly refused to work with GBIO on our worker and resident Bill of Rights.

In addition to reinstating the clergy, we are hopeful about making progress on our other requests. We are in the process of planning next steps, and our success depends on the interest and involvement of Dorshei Tzedek congregants and other GBIO members. Please contact **Paul Hattis** at pahattis@comcast.net for more information.

The Organized Money Campaign

The Organized Money Campaign is based on the premise that GBIO member institutions, standing together, represent many millions of dollars worth of clout in demanding better service from the financial community. Specifically, GBIO is working with Citizens Bank on a campaign to encourage Citizens to provide more attractive banking and financial service benefits to GBIO members and the broader community in exchange for moving Church, Synagogue and perhaps personal assets to their bank. Already, Citizens has agreed to make it much less expensive for immigrants to wire monies back to their home countries, which has traditionally been an enormous and exploitative burden for those who can least afford it. In addition, Citizens is planning to provide GBIO with a \$500,000 grant to further its overall work.

GBIO is encouraging its members to survey their congregations on what sort of benefits for themselves (and for others of various income levels) we would expect in return for moving our coordinated assets to Citizens Bank. In upcoming weeks, the GBIO Organized Money group at Dorshei Tzedek plans to contact our members to survey ideas and level of interest in participating in this effort with other GBIO institutions and members. In addition, we are considering whether the Newton/Brookline/Brighton community of GBIO member institutions may also want to approach Citizens as a local group to negotiate for additional socially responsible investments or benefits in our communities. Please don't hesitate to contact **Emily Sper** (emilysper@comcast.net) or **Sheree Galpert** (sgalpert@yahoo.com) if you are interested in learning more about this effort.

GBIO is an opportunity for Dorshei Tzedek members to stand together with members of churches, synagogues and other communities from around Boston to demand better services and treatment from local businesses and government. Together, we are already making a difference.

Wal-Mart Protest

Sunday, December 5, 2 – 3 pm

780 Lynnway in Lynn, MA

Barbara Shatkin, bfshatkin@aol.com

Ever been to a protest? We need your support! As part of our school's *Behind the Labels* school-wide *tikkun olam* project on sweatshop labor, Dorshei Tzedek is co-sponsoring a protest at Wal-Mart, 780 Lynnway, in Lynn, MA on **Sunday, December 5** from 2 – 3 pm. The fifth grade class of Workmen's Circle is taking the lead in organizing this protest. Other co-sponsors of this year's protest include: Mass AFL-CIO, Mass Jobs With Justice, Mass NOW, Union of Needletrades, Industrial and Textile Employees (UNITE) New England Region, and the Jewish Labor Committee.

The school's focus on the problem of sweatshop workers began last spring. In October of this school year, our seventh grade class attended a tour of Bangladesh factory workers at Boston College, sponsored by the National Labor Committee. It was a unique opportunity for students to learn about sweatshops directly from those who have been exploited by them. (See first hand accounts from students on page 10).

In November, the school had an assembly devoted to learning about sweatshop abuse and what American consumers can do to take a stand against sweatshop abuse. Some of these abuses include: forced and unpaid overtime, locked bathrooms, starvation wages, and forced pregnancy tests.

Our school's participation in the Wal-Mart protest is a logical outgrowth of our students' learning about sweatshops and their active participation in *tikkun olam*. The purpose of the Wal-Mart protest is to raise consciousness about the exploitation of workers in factories supplying goods to Wal-Mart, and is definitely not a call to boycott. It really helps the kids, and increases the overall success of the protest, when there is a large turn-out for the event. All CDT congregants are welcome and encouraged to show their support for this protest. Interested participants can either travel on their own to Wal-Mart or carpool from the bank parking lot, leaving at 1 pm on Sunday, December 5.

Please contact **Barbara Shatkin** at bfshatkin@aol.com or 617.964.3121 if you want further information, directions, or carpool arrangement information.

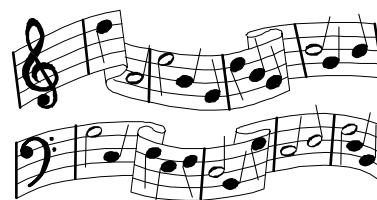
Behind the Labels Educational Event



Also as part of the religious school's *Behind the Labels* tikkun olam project, we are holding an educational event the afternoon of Sunday, March 13 at the First Unitarian Society. The purpose of this event is to inform and engage people in learning about the exploitation and horrible working conditions of the factory workers who make our clothes, and what we as consumers can do to address these problems. Congregants of all ages are invited to attend. Anyone interested in working on this project should contact **Barbara Shatkin** as well.

Shabbat Tapes Available

Sung by Rabbi Toba Spitzer, Dorshei Tzedek has available audio tapes of: (1) the Friday evening Family Service and (2) our regular Shabbat morning service. To order either or both tapes, please send payment of \$6/tape (includes shipping) to Congregation Dorshei Tzedek, 60 Highland Street, West Newton, MA 02465. Don't miss the online music sample available at www.dorsheitzedek.org/rabbi-music.htm.



School News

*Cindy Shulak-Rome, school@dorsheitzedek.org
and Rebekah Ralen*

Todah Rabah

Thank you to the **Brenner-Kajen Family** and the **Leonard Family** for the donation of books to our school library.

Our thanks to **Marc Steinberg** for joining us at our School Ma'ariv Service and accompanying us on guitar.

Details of Junior Congregation and Tot Shabbat are on page 3

Tikkun Olam

"Behind the Labels:" our School Wide Tikkun Olam Project
In conjunction with this project, the *Kitah Zayin* class recently attended the Bangladesh Factory Worker Tour at Boston College. This event, sponsored by the National Labor Committee, was an opportunity for some of our students to hear first hand from women whose basic human rights are continually exploited in their work. The women we heard from work in a factory that makes clothing exclusively for Wal-Mart. As a follow-up to this experience, Dorhei Tzedek is co-sponsoring a demonstration on Sunday December 5 at the Wal-Mart in Lynn. We are also planning an educational event on Sunday, March 13. See page 9 for information on both.

Bangladesh Workers Tour: Two Eyewitness Reports

by Aviva Galpert and Ethan Zolit

The Bangladesh Workers Tour had come to Boston College for the Year 2004. Listening was hard for everyone. Each of the three visitors had very different and very painful stories, and each was as dramatic as the next! Almost every listener in the room had taken on a concerned expression, and every one was wondering what they could do to help. Their stories made you feel like you were there, and at the same time, be incredibly grateful that you weren't.

The visitors presented stories of abuse, extreme poverty and unfairness. They described not having enough money to live by—walking to work in the rain, because they didn't have \$3.00 for an umbrella! No money for a 75-cent

toothbrush or toothpaste, and a half an egg was once a month treat! They were horribly beaten, underpaid, and overworked in the sweatshops. Can you even imagine getting a beating because you were seen at work speaking, communicating, or even being caught moving a lip? They were beaten mercilessly if they hadn't

reached an outrageous target of clothes. One woman who spoke had been seven months pregnant, but hadn't been given permission to leave work. She took a short rest and when her employer saw her not making progress she was instructed to get back to work immediately. When she didn't jump right back to her sewing machine he kicked her in the stomach. Her baby, who is now two, was born with a bruise on her head. The baby lives with her grandmother, and when she is 10 or 11, she will work in a sweatshop, just another uneducated generation, a child whose Mother is sometimes forced to sleep in the factory, working seven days a week for 12 hours as it is. By the time the little girl is working, her mother may have retired, although not by choice.

We learned that there are labor laws in Bangladesh, but instead of being enforced they are absolutely abused, even by police. At one point, some workers went on strike. They were beaten with three-foot clubs, and when the police illegally shot into the crowd eight women were killed on the spot, and several more were injured. All of this was done by the police, men who were supposed to protect them, the men who were given the jobs that gave them enough money to live decently, much more money than the workers. This kind of thing was astonishing to almost everyone. After these heart-wrenching stories were told, the viewers were told that if Wal-Mart raised the price of each clothing item by an extra twenty-five cents, just this small amount could lift the women out of poverty.

Write letters, do what you can as a consumer, talk to the managers of Wal-Mart and Kohl's, two of the companies causing the most trouble. Write to the Olson twins, two col-



(Continued on page 11)

(Continued from page 10)

lege-age girls whose clothing line is made by sweat shop workers, and who have the money, but not the heart to change that. And, whenever you are stressed about workloads that you have, think about how much worse it could be. Whenever you have this thought, please be reminded to contribute an extra quarter to everything you buy. Think of it as *tzedakah*. For us it's nothing. For them it adds up.—Aviva Galpert

My Hebrew school class (*Kitah Zayin*) and I, went to a presentation on sweatshop workers in Bangladesh on the campus of Boston College. At the presentation there were three young female sweatshop workers, and one male Bengali translator. The three workers talked to us about what bad conditions they experienced. These girls get up very early in the morning and go home very late at night. They work more than twelve-hour days in a crowded, stale aired sweatshop with a fifteen- minute break for lunch and only one bathroom break. When they are even a little bit behind in their work their bosses yell at them and slap them. If they get hurt and it's not life threatening they don't get any medical attention, not even a Band-Aid. In the bathroom there is no toilet paper or soap. There are also no maternity leaves, or skipping any days of work. You are only allowed one short vacation per year.

The conditions sweatshop workers live in are horrible. Their houses have a roof that leaks. They need to sleep on the ground or a one-person platform. There is only one fire pit to cook with, a dirt floor, and worst of all there is only one little room in the whole house. They only get paid \$7.00 a week. Minimum wage in the United States is about \$7.00 an hour. That's about nine cents per hour in the sweatshops! With that kind of money they can only buy a very little amount of rice and beans for their families, and almost nothing more. They don't have enough money for things like a toothbrush and toothpaste, silverware, an umbrella, a pencil, a piece of paper, a book, an education, a television, a phone, a radio, and all other electronics.

These workers are sewing garments for Wal-Mart stores. The National Labor Committee determined that if you just paid 25 cents more per garment you purchased, you could give sweatshop workers an average life. You can support sweat shop workers by protesting, asking the manager of these clothing stores if they use sweatshop workers, hearing the workers talk about their experiences, or just spreading the word.—Ethan Zolit

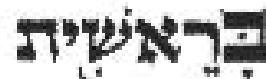
No'ar Hadash Youth Group

Elyse Rast, markelyse@comcast.net

Tikkun Olam Event: December 5

Attention 7th and 8th graders! No'ar Hadash Youth Group is going so well and it's all because of YOU!!! Each and every one of you that's attended an event has made an attempt to talk to a new person, and I really appreciate that! Everybody in the community is so excited by the warmth you exhibit and your overall friendly nature. We have had two events this year: Rock climbing and games in October and attending a film through Boston Jewish Film Festival in November. Please keep your calendars cleared for **Sunday, December 5** when we'll be having a *Tikkun Olam* program. Again, thanks for all your support and bring a friend to the next event to show them how fabulous No'ar Hadash is! Questions/Comments: Elyse Rast, Advisor (email above), or 508.346.3231.

Learn to Leyn

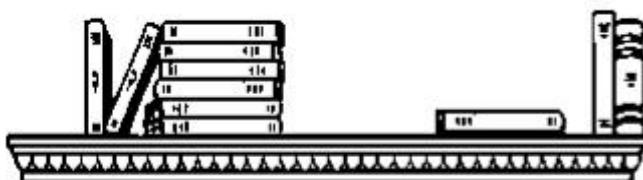


Dorshei Tzedek will organize a Torah leyning class if there's enough interest. The class will consist of 8-10 sessions of 1.5 hours each, most likely on Sunday evenings but specific dates to be determined by class members. We need a minimum of 4 committed learners for the class, and the maximum class size is 8. You should have good facility reading Biblical Hebrew, you need to commit to attend all classes, and upon "graduation" you should expect to leyn for Shabbat services. If you're unsure of your reading level, call Chayim Herzog-Marx (he'll be leading the class) for a free consultation.

The Shelf is Bare!

Nancy Gertz, president@dorsheitzedek.org

If you have borrowed books from the Death and Dying shelf of our library and you are finished with them, please return them. If you have any books that you own on the same subject that you think would be good additions to our library, please consider donating them. Thanks!



Report from the November Members' Meeting

Peter Hess, pheess@mit.edu

About 60 Dorshei Tzedek members met on Sunday, November 7. They heard reports on several congregational initiatives and got updates on the work of several committees. After the reports, those at the meeting participated in small group discussions to initiate the second round of Community Conversations.

Rabbi Sapsowitz began with a D'var Torah on *Hachnasat Orchim*, the mitzvah of welcoming guests. She said that this mitzvah is more than just "inviting." The virtue is in going outside and bringing people in—a tangible way to begin to build community. *Hachnasat Orchim* is the attitude that we want to infuse our Shabbat Kiddush celebrations, as we reframe them to make providing Kiddush more of a mitzvah and less of a chore. A committee has worked hard on this reframing process, with the intent of bringing more choice and joy into it (See page 5).

Dorshei Tzedek President, **Nancy Gertz**, said that the adjustments necessitated by the rabbinic sabbatical year are going beautifully. Education Director **Cindy Shulak-Rome** reported that the education program is off to a good start, with 100 students enrolled in grades K-7, the successful launch of our youth group (No'ar Hadash) for students in grades 7 and 8, and the pilot Bat Mitzvah project, "It's a Girl Thing" underway. Cindy also talked about the school's Tikkun Olam project, "Behind the Labels," which is being led by member **Barbara Shatkin**. There will be an all-community event for this project in March to raise our awareness of this project that is enabling our children to act individually and communally in the repair of the world (See page 9).

Roberta Carson summarized the results of Nativ Lev survey and thanked all who responded. The survey elicited both positive and negative feedback and the committee will use those responses to improve their process. They also aim to increase general understanding of the importance of Nativ Lev. The committee will put out the congregation's first annual report in the next 4-6 weeks, and one goal of that report is to highlight that Nativ Lev funds are essential to meeting our basic operating expenses.

Carla Naumburg reported for the Membership Outreach Committee that 12 households have joined CDT since Au-

gust. We had a very successful Open House in early October, with 13 people from not-yet-member households attending, all of whom received a follow-up phone call. Some have since become members. We'll have a New Member Orientation on January 8th. The Membership Outreach Committee is looking for people to help out with making intake phone calls. Email outreach@dorsheitzedek.org if you'd like to help.

An important initiative planned for this year is the End of Life and Bereavement program, being led by **Nicky Silver** and **Jill Volk** (See Board Notes on page 3). **Janice Fine**, **Paul Hattis**, and **Sheree Galpert** spoke about the congregation's involvement in the GBIO (Greater Boston Interfaith Organization). The GBIO is currently putting its energies into two projects. The nursing home campaign is an effort to win greater dignity and respect for both nursing home workers and residents through a "Bill of Rights" that addresses the needs of both groups. Paul reported that there was an action at a nursing home in West Newton on October 28th that drew 130 protesters, five from CDT, protesting the exclusion from that facility of clergy active in GBIO who had formerly been ministering to people there. The second GBIO initiative is called "organized money" and seeks to get congregations and individuals to view their separate financial resources as a pool that can be leveraged to gain socially beneficial concessions from local financial institutions. (See page 2).

Andrew Compaine, Chair of the Community Conversations Committee, introduced the activity that ended the meeting. As was the case last year, Community Conversations will train 10-14 congregants to interview members of 30-40 households this year. The goal is to develop relationships with members, find out how the community serves their needs, and look at barriers to fuller engagement. Those of us at the meeting divided into sub-groups to explore the ambivalence that some congregants experience. Comments were transcribed and will be discussed by the facilitators at a debriefing session later.

We are looking for space for our Bat Mitzvah year Shabbaton in June. If you have any ideas for spaces that might be appropriate, and inexpensive, please send email to suggestions@dorsheitzedek.org.



December Calendar



Cut here to remove

Date	Time	Event	Kiddush / Notes
Wed Dec 1	7:30 pm - 9 pm	Adult Ed: Behaving, Believing and Belonging: What Makes Reconstructionism Different? With Rabbi Marna Sapsowitz	60 Highland St: Library
Thu Dec 2	4:15 pm - 5:45 pm	Adult Hebrew Class	FUSN
Fri Dec 3	6 pm - 7 pm	Erev Shabbat Family Service	Pam Schoenberg & Joel Reider, Barbara & Jerry Zolit
Sat Dec 4	9:45 am - 12 pm	Shabbat Morning Service Bat Mitzvah of Naomi Frankston	Sanctuary cleanup: Hara Klein & Eleni Carr, Elizabeth Ross & Caren Smith
Sun Dec 5	2 pm - 4 pm	Gan Family Program #3	FUSN
Tue Dec 7	6:45 pm - 9:15 pm	Adult Hebrew Class	FUSN
Thu Dec 9	4:30 pm - 5:45 pm	Adult Hebrew Class	FUSN
Sat Dec 11	9:45 am - 12 pm	Shabbat Morning Service	Teri Hauserman & Stan Piltch, Erica Streit & James Kaplan, Jill Stanzler-Katz & Jeff Katz
Sat Dec 11	10 am - 12 pm	Kitah Aleph Class, Kitah Bet Family Ed	FUSN
Sun Dec 12	5 pm - 7 pm	Chanukah Celebration (see page 3)	FUSN: Janice Fine, Diana & Richard Fisher Gomberg, Cheryl & Jeff Sacks, Mei See Sandson, Carolyn Fine & Jerry Freidman
Tue Dec 14	6:45 pm - 9:15 pm	Adult Hebrew Class	FUSN
Wed Dec 15	7:30 pm - 9 pm	Adult Ed: Behaving, Believing and Belonging: What Makes Reconstructionism Different? With Rabbi Marna Sapsowitz	60 Highland St: Library (see page 9)
Thu Dec 16	4:15 pm - 5:30 pm	Adult Hebrew Class	FUSN
Fri Dec 17	6 pm - 8 pm	Kitah Dalet Dinner	FUSN
Fri Dec 17	8 pm - 9:30 pm	Adult Erev Shabbat Service	Naomi Botkin, Lynne Brandon
Sat Dec 18	8:45 am	Shabbat Morning Torah Study	(see page 3)
Sat Dec 18	9:45 am - 12 pm	Shabbat Morning Service	Ann Spanel, Lilly Platt, Jeff Kichen
Sat Dec 18	10:30 am - 11 am	Tot Shabbat	(see page 3)
Sat Dec 18	10:30 am - 12 pm	Junior Congregation (for children grades 3-7)	(see page 3)
Sun Dec 19	7:30 pm	Board Meeting	
Thu Dec 23		No Classes - Winter Recess thru 1/3/05	
Sat Dec 25	9:45 am - 12 pm	Shabbat Morning Service*	

No Fragrances, Please: So that Dorshei Tzedek services and events are accessible to all of our members and guests, we ask that people refrain from wearing fragrances (perfume, scented oils, cologne, etc.) to all Dorshei Tzedek events. While pleasant to some, these fragrances can cause illness to those who are chemically sensitive. Thank you for your understanding and flexibility.

Events and services are held at The Second Church, 60 Highland Street, West Newton, unless otherwise noted. An asterisk (*) denotes Rabbi Sapsowitz's weekend off; members of the congregation will lead services. Free childcare is available during Shabbat morning services in the large classroom near the office on the first floor.



January Calendar



Date	Time	Event	Kiddush / Notes
Sat Jan 1		NO Shabbat Morning Services	
Tue Jan 4		Classes Resume	
Tue Jan 4	6:45 pm - 9:15 pm	Adult Hebrew Class	FUSN: Classroom 2
Thu Jan 6	4:15 pm - 5:30 pm	Adult Hebrew Class	FUSN: Alliance Room
Fri Jan 7	6 pm - 7 pm	Erev Shabbat Family Service	Abby Cohen, Ilana Mainelli (see page 3)
Sat Jan 8	9:45 am - 12 pm	Shabbat Morning Service Bar Mitzvah of Ethan Zolit (see page 4)	Lisa Goodman & Bill Weinreb, Beth Brooks & Hankus Netsky, Sarah Little & Douglas Hersh; Sanctuary Clean-Up: Dinah Moeller & Sasha Goldberg
Sat Jan 8	7:30 pm - 9 pm	New Member Orientation	60 Highland St: Sanctuary
Sun Jan 9	2 pm - 4 pm	Gan Family Program #4	FUSN
Sun Jan 9	2 pm - 4 pm	Kitah Zayin Family Ed	FUSN
Sun Jan 9	7:30 pm	Board Meeting	60 Highland St: Parlor
Tue Jan 11	6:45 pm - 9:15 pm	Adult Hebrew Class	FUSN: Classroom 2
Thu Jan 13	4:15 pm - 5:45 pm	Adult Hebrew Class	FUSN: Alliance Room
Sat Jan 15		No Class - MLK Weekend	
Sat Jan 15	8:45 am	Shabbat Morning Torah Study	60 Highland St (see page 7)
Sat Jan 15	9:45 am - 12 pm	Shabbat Morning Service	Debbie Hemley & Jonathan Weisberg, Laurie & Jonathan Kahn-Leavitt, Karen & Reinhard Engels
Sat Jan 15	10:30 am - 11 am	Tot Shabbat	60 Highland St: Room 112 (see page 3)
Sat Jan 15	10:45 am - 12 pm	Junior Congregation	60 Highland St: Room 111 (see page 3)
Tue Jan 18	6:45 pm - 9:15 pm	Adult Hebrew Class	FUSN: Classroom 2
Fri Jan 21	6 pm - 8 pm	Kitah Aleph Shabbat Dinner	FUSN
Fri Jan 21	8 pm - 9:30 pm	Adult Erev Shabbat Service	Emily Sper, Caryn-Amy King
Sat Jan 22	9:45 am - 12 pm	Shabbat Morning Service Bar Mitzvah of Micah Shapiro	Howard Kaufman, Elise Brenner, Elizabeth Carver & Bryn Austin; Sanctuary Clean-up: Rachel Greenberg, Melanie Adler & Andy Cohen
Sun Jan 23	2 pm - 4 pm	Kitah Hay Family Ed	FUSN
Mon Jan 24	6:30 pm - 8:30 pm	Tu B'shvat	Steffi & Eric Karp, Sharon Gorberg & John Holohan FUSN
Tue Jan 25	6:45 pm - 9:15 pm	Adult Hebrew Class	FUSN: Classroom 2
Thu Jan 27		No Class - Staff In-service	
Sat Jan 29	9:45 am - 12 pm	Shabbat Morning Service Bar Mitzvah of Josh Nadler	Sanctuary Clean-Up: Toni Rosenberg, Laura & Joel Katz
Sat Jan 29	10 am - 12 pm	Kitah Aleph Family Ed, Kitah Bet Class	FUSN
Sun Jan 30	10 am - 12 pm	Sarah Hager and Abraham: The Power of Empathy in Relationships with Marcia Mirkin	60 Highland St: Sanctuary (see page 7)
Sun Jan 30	2 pm - 4 pm	Kitah Gimel Family Ed	FUSN

Sign Up For Special Interest Member Potlucks

Judy Hersh, judyhersh@comcast.net



In the past, the Membership Committee has organized potluck dinners at members' homes as a way of both celebrating Shabbat together as well as providing an opportunity for members to get to know one another through small group gatherings. **This year we'd like to expand the potluck dinners to provide a way for members with special interests and/or life circumstances to get to know one another.** Occasionally, we might arrange a potluck dinner for those members who would like to attend based on their identification with the special

interests or age/stage of the group.

We've come up with a few possible such configurations, and **want to hear your ideas** for these special interest themed potlucks. So far, our brains have stormed out the following:

- Under 40's
- Singles
- Pre/post bar/bat mitzvah families who might want to discuss and share planning ideas
- Non Jewish members
- Parents of very young children
- Parents of special needs children
- Members interested in environmental issues
- Members interested in a game night

E-mail Judy Hersh and let her know what kinds of potlucks you'd be interested in, and whether you're willing to host.



שלום

Welcome New Members!

Richard Cohen and Rachel Nemeth Cohen live in Watertown with their children: **Samuel**, age 8, and **Ruby**, age 4. They have lived in Watertown for 10 years. They enjoy being outside, playing ball, biking, running, cross-country skiing and hiking. Sam is in the second grade at the Lowell School in Watertown and Ruby is enjoying her second year at the Watertown Cooperative Nursery School. Richard is the co-founder and director of School Mediation Associates, an organization that trains educators and students in peer mediation skills and conflict resolution. Rachel works at the Institute for Community Inclusion, an organization that works to promote the inclusion of people with disabilities in their communities through research, training and direct service. They are happy to be members of Dorshei Tzedek and look forward to growing both educationally and spiritually.

Congregation Dorshei Tzedek
60 Highland Street
West Newton, MA 02465

Dorshei Tzedek Mission Statement

Dorshei Tzedek is a Reconstructionist Congregation dedicated to creating a caring and inclusive community, and to enhancing Jewish practice and learning in the lives of our members. "Dorshei Tzedek" means "seekers of justice," and as our name implies, we are seekers: of meaningful spirituality, of serious Jewish learning, and of social justice.

Consistent with Reconstructionist philosophy, we are committed to seriously engaging with Jewish tradition, challenging that tradition, where need be, and building on the tradition in creative ways. We do this in order to enhance our own lives as contemporary Jews and to perpetuate our bond—and our children's bond—to our heritage. We view education for ourselves and our children as fundamental to Jewish life.

We are a participatory congregation, encouraging all of our members to take an active role in some aspect of our congregational life. Our rabbi is our partner in this endeavor, and is both teacher and participant in our community. We value diversity in our congregation, and welcome all those who share our commitments.

Finally, we affirm the concept of mitzvah as obligation, acting on our Jewish values through deeds of *tzedek* (social justice) and *gemilut chasadim* (loving kindness), both within our congregation and in the larger community.